(e) and (f) Sub-rule (11) of Rule (7) of the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994 has provided that "no programme shall carry advertisements exceeding 12 minutes per hour, which may include upto 10 minutes per hour of the commercial advertisement and upto 2 minutes per hour of a channels' self promotional programmes".

Parameters for setting up of channels

1908. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has asked the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) to recommend parameters or eligibility criteria and financial viability related criteria for setting up of channels;

(b) if so, the details of the recommendations made by TRAI in this regard;

(c) whether Government has since taken a serious view of a number of illegal channels being beamed out by cable operators in some parts of the country; and

(d) if so, the manner in which operation of such illegal channels would be checked?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI CHOUDHURY MOHAN JATUA): (a) A reference has been made by this Ministry to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in October 2009. Among other things, TRAI has been requested to examine the maximum number of channels which can be permitted in the country keeping in view the available spectrum and transponder capacities as well as technological developments and general practice internationally and to examine the eligibility criteria with regard to financial viability and experience of the organization seeking permission.

(b) Reply from TRAI is awaited.

(c) and (d) Only the channels which are permitted by the Ministry under Uplinking and Downlinking Guidelines can be distributed by cable operators. Unauthorized Channels would attract the provisions of Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and Rules framed thereunder whereby action can be taken by authorized officers against the offending cable operators.

Curtailing powers of Prasar Bharati Board

1909. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has recently decided to take away the powers of the Prasar Bharati Board;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government has received a spate of complaints about the functioning of the Prasar Bharati Board; and

(d) if so, the details and nature of the complaints and the action contemplated by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI CHOUDHURY MOHAN JATUA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The Government has received copies of representations and correspondences from members of the Prasar Bharati Board to the CEO and also the Chairman, Prasar Bharati Board regarding issues pertaining to the functioning of the Prasar Bharati Board. Government has ordered a special audit of Prasar Bharati on General Accounting Issues including the issue of functioning of Prasar Bharati and its Board and Specific Financial Issues as per the complaints of Member (Finance) Prasar Bharati.

The letters are in the nature of allegations regarding irresponsible behaviour of the Chairman, ECO and members of the Board, manner of fixing dates for the Board meetings, finalization and issue of minutes in departure from the past practices, financial irregularities, systemic problems etc. indicating disharmony among the Board members.

A Public Interest Litigation was filed by Center for Public Interest Litigation in the High Court of Delhi which included certain issues pertaining to functioning of the Board. The High Court vide its interim order dated 27/07/2009, has given directions on certain issues pertaining to the functioning of the Board such as the minutes of meetings of the Board dated 21.01.2009, 16.02.2009, 23.03.2009, 18.05.2009 and 25.06.2009 as authenticated by the Chairman has to be implemented, submissions of compliance report of the implementation of the Resolutions and the minutes book to the High Court and fixing the date of the Board meeting. It has also directed that the allegation regarding financial and administrative irregularities etc. are referred to the Central Vigilance Commission for appropriate investigation. The same has been referred to Central Vigilance Commission by Prasar Bharati. In its final orders dated 13/11/2009, the High Court dismissed the PIL while upholding the interim directions to refer allegations regarding financial and administrative irregularities to Central Vigilance Commission. In the meanwhile, an SLP has been filed in the Supreme Court by the CEO, Prasar Bharati against the interim order of the High Court. The matter is *sub-judice*.

Changes in Court Fee Act and Indian Stamp Act

1910. SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state: